

In the claims:

Following is a complete set of claims as amended with this Response.

1. (Original) A method for closing a communications stream between a first terminal and a second terminal in a communications system, the communications stream having repeating time slots in a time division channel comprising:

sending a closing message in a first slot from the first terminal to the second terminal to request that the communications stream be closed;

listening to the communications stream at the first terminal to determine whether any messages are sent from the second terminal to the first terminal in a slot after the first slot; and

closing the stream, if no further messages are received from the second terminal.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the repeating time slots comprise a set of repeating slots for the second terminal and wherein closing the stream comprises closing the stream if no further messages are received in the next slot for the second terminal after sending the closing message.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the communications stream comprises a data traffic channel and wherein sending a closing message comprises sending a closing message in the data traffic channel.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein closing the stream comprises sending a further closing message in a second slot from the first terminal to the second terminal, if a further message is received from the second terminal.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising checking a transmit buffer in the first terminal and wherein sending a closing message is performed in response to an absence of data in the buffer.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein sending a closing message is performed in response to an absence of data in a transmit buffer for more than a determined amount of time.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 6 4 wherein the determined amount of time is selected to be greater than the amount of time required to close the communications stream and then open a new communications stream.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein listening to the communications stream comprises listening at the first terminal in a sequence of slots after the first slot, the number of slots in the sequence being determined by the possibility of being able to distinguish a message from the second terminal from noise in the channel.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 8 wherein the number of slots in the sequence is determined by a class of modulation being used for the stream.

10. (Original) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions which, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform operations comprising:

 sending a closing message in a first slot of a communications stream from the first terminal to the second terminal to request that the communications stream be closed the stream having repeating time slots in a time division channel;

listening to the communications stream at the first terminal to determine whether any messages are sent from the second terminal to the first terminal in a slot after the first slot; and

closing the stream, if no further messages are received from the second terminal.

11. (Original) The medium of Claim 10, wherein the repeating time slots comprise a set of repeating slots for the second terminal and wherein the instructions for closing the stream comprise further instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising closing the stream if no further messages are received in the next slot for the second terminal after sending the closing message.

12. (Original) The medium of Claim 10, wherein the instructions comprise further instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising checking a transmit buffer in the first terminal and wherein the instructions for sending a closing message are performed in response to an absence of data in the buffer.

13. (Original) The medium of Claim 10, wherein the instructions for sending a closing message are performed in response to an absence of data in a transmit buffer for more than a determined amount of time.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of determining to close a communications stream between a first terminal and a second terminal in a communications system comprising:

 checking a transmit buffer for data to transmit in the stream;

 waiting for a determined amount of time;

 rechecking the transmit buffer; and

determining whether previously transmitted data included a data boundary value;

comparing the boundary value to the data previously transmitted; and

 determining to close the communications stream, if there is no data in the transmit buffer to transmit after the checking and the rechecking, and if the data boundary value is satisfied.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the determined amount of time is selected to be greater than the amount of time required to close the communications stream and then open a new communications stream.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Original) The method of Claim 16, wherein the data boundary value indicates the size of a data packet to be transmitted.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 16, wherein the data boundary value indicates streaming data with no predetermined endpoint.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 16, wherein the data boundary value indicates a diagnostic sequence.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 14, further comprising:

checking a higher layer protocol to determine whether all data units to be transmitted have been received; and

determining to close the communications stream, if all of the data units to be transmitted have been received and there is no data in the data buffer after the checking and rechecking.

21. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions which, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform operations comprising:

checking a transmit buffer a first terminal for data to transmit in a communications stream;

waiting for a determined amount of time;

rechecking the transmit buffer; and

determining whether previously transmitted data included a data boundary value;

comparing the boundary value to the data previously transmitted; and

determining to close the communications stream, if there is no data in the transmit buffer to transmit after the checking and the rechecking, and if the boundary value is satisfied.

22. (Original) The medium of Claim 21, further comprising instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising:

determining whether previously transmitted data included a data boundary value; comparing the boundary value to the data previously transmitted; and if the data boundary value is satisfied then determining to close the communications stream.

23. (Original) The medium of Claim 22, wherein the data boundary value indicates the size of a data packet to be transmitted.

24. (Original) The medium of Claim 21, further comprising instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising:

checking a higher layer protocol to determine whether all data units to be transmitted have been received; and determining to close the communications stream, if all of the data units to be transmitted have been received and there is no data in the data buffer after the checking and rechecking.

25. (New) A method for closing a communications stream between a first terminal and a second terminal in a communications system, the communications stream having repeating time slots in a time division channel comprising:

sending a closing message in a first slot from the first terminal to the second terminal to request that the communications stream be closed, the closing message being sent in response to an absence of data in a transmit buffer for more than a determined

amount of time, the determined amount of time being greater than the amount of time required to close the communications stream and then open a new communications stream;

listening to the communications stream at the first terminal to determine whether any messages are sent from the second terminal to the first terminal in a slot after the first slot; and

closing the stream, if no further messages are received from the second terminal.

26. (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein the repeating time slots comprise a set of repeating slots for the second terminal and wherein closing the stream comprises closing the stream if no further messages are received in the next slot for the second terminal after sending the closing message.

27. (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein closing the stream comprises sending a further closing message in a second slot from the first terminal to the second terminal, if a further message is received from the second terminal.

28. (New) The method of Claim 25, further comprising checking a transmit buffer in the first terminal and wherein sending a closing message is performed in response to an absence of data in the buffer.

29. (New) The method of Claim 25, wherein listening to the communications stream comprises listening at the first terminal in a sequence of slots after the first slot, the number of slots in the sequence being determined by the possibility of being able to distinguish a message from the second terminal from noise in the channel.

30. (New) The method of Claim 29 wherein the number of slots in the sequence is determined by a class of modulation being used for the stream.

31. (New) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions which, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform operations comprising:

sending a closing message in a first slot from the first terminal to the second terminal to request that the communications stream be closed, the closing message being sent in response to an absence of data in a transmit buffer for more than a determined amount of time, the determined amount of time being greater than the amount of time required to close the communications stream and then open a new communications stream;

listening to the communications stream at the first terminal to determine whether any messages are sent from the second terminal to the first terminal in a slot after the first slot; and

closing the stream, if no further messages are received from the second terminal.

32. (New) The medium of Claim 31, wherein the repeating time slots comprise a set of repeating slots for the second terminal and wherein the instructions for closing the stream comprise further instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising closing the stream if no further messages are received in the next slot for the second terminal after sending the closing message.

33. (New) The medium of Claim 31, wherein the instructions comprise further instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising checking a transmit buffer in the first terminal and wherein the instructions for sending a closing message are performed in response to an absence of data in the buffer.

34. (New) A method of determining to close a communications stream between a first terminal and a second terminal in a communications system comprising:

 checking a transmit buffer for data to transmit in the stream;

 waiting for a determined amount of time;

 rechecking the transmit buffer;

 determining to close the communications stream, if there is no data in the transmit buffer to transmit after the checking and the rechecking;

 determining whether previously transmitted data included a data boundary value, the data boundary value indicating a diagnostic sequence;

 comparing the boundary value to the data previously transmitted; and

 if the data boundary value is satisfied then determining to close the communications stream.

35. (New) The method of Claim 34, wherein the determined amount of time is selected to be greater than the amount of time required to close the communications stream and then open a new communications stream.

36. (New) The method of Claim 36, wherein the data boundary value indicates the size of a data packet to be transmitted.

37. (New) The method of Claim 34, further comprising:

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checking a higher layer protocol to determine whether all data units to be transmitted have been received; and

determining to close the communications stream, if all of the data units to be transmitted have been received and there is no data in the data buffer after the checking and rechecking.

38. (New) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions which, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform operations comprising:

checking a transmit buffer a first terminal for data to transmit in a communications stream;

waiting for a determined amount of time;

rechecking the transmit buffer;

determining to close the communications stream, if there is no data in the transmit buffer to transmit after the checking and the rechecking;

determining whether previously transmitted data included a data boundary value, the data boundary value indicating a diagnostic sequence;

comparing the boundary value to the data previously transmitted; and

if the data boundary value is satisfied then determining to close the communications stream.

39. (New) The medium of Claim 38, further comprising instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising:

determining whether previously transmitted data included a data boundary value;

comparing the boundary value to the data previously transmitted; and
if the data boundary value is satisfied then determining to close the
communications stream.

40. (New) The medium of Claim 38, further comprising instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform further operations comprising:

checking a higher layer protocol to determine whether all data units to be transmitted have been received; and
determining to close the communications stream, if all of the data units to be transmitted have been received and there is no data in the data buffer after the checking and rechecking.